



# **TENNESSEE BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION**

## *Forensic Services Division*

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### **Violent Crime Response Team Standard Operating Procedures Equipment**

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#### **1.5. Equipment**

**1.5.1** Equipment is defined as instruments, reagents, or reference material. All equipment having an effect on the accuracy or validity of forensic examinations will be fit for use and properly maintained.

**1.5.2** Equipment shall be stored, transported, used, and maintained according to manufacturer recommendations. When equipment is not in use, it shall be protected from contamination and cleaned, as needed, before being returned for use.

**1.5.3** Reagents will be checked before use. When reagents are prepared, they will be labeled, at a minimum, with the identity of the reagent, date of preparation or lot number. Records will identify who made the reagent, the date of preparation or lot number, who tested it, and whether it worked as expected.

**1.5.4** Reference materials maintained for identification, comparison, or interpretation purposes shall be documented, uniquely identified, and handled according to manufacturer recommendations.

**1.5.5** Routine equipment maintenance is the responsibility of all Violent Crime Response Team members. Damaged, depleted, or inoperable equipment will be reported immediately to the Crime Laboratory Regional Supervisor (or designee) to ensure that it is repaired or replaced. Restocking the equipment, materials, and supplies used during a crime scene will be completed by the VCRT that used them and prior to releasing the vehicle to another VCRT Leader. Depleted materials should be replenished as soon as possible from existing stock or reported to the Crime Laboratory Regional Supervisor (or designee).

**1.5.6** Each regional Laboratory shall designate equipment storage areas for crime scene processing materials not stored in the VCRT vehicle. These storage areas are to be accessible by VCRT Leaders at all times.

**1.5.7** Crime scene equipment and supplies are not for general laboratory use. They may be used for processing vehicles in the laboratory vehicle bay area, impound lot, or for other crime scene-related work in the laboratory. All equipment removed from the VCRT should be returned by the end of the business day on which or when it



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---

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---

was removed. The “on-call” VCRT Leader or team member will be notified when a piece of equipment is removed from the VCRT vehicle.

#### **1.5.8 Violent Crime Response Team Vehicle**

**1.5.8.1** Due to the unpredictable nature of crime scene investigations, it is essential to have properly equipped and maintained crime scene vehicles available to respond in a timely manner. These vehicles must be equipped to handle a variety of circumstances and environmental conditions likely to be encountered by the VCRT. Properly equipped and maintained VCRT vehicles should contain the equipment, materials, reagents, and personal protective gear necessary to conduct a thorough and safe crime scene investigation.

**1.5.8.2** All equipment and evidence will be properly stowed in the vehicle before being driven. Due to obstructed visibility to the rear of the vehicle, the use of a spotter or backup camera is recommended when backing up.

**1.5.8.3** The Violent Crime Response Team vehicle(s) are equipped with a flashing light bar and siren. The use of the blue lights and siren may only be used with the authorization of the Director of the TBI (or designee). The authorizing authority should be documented in the VCRT Leader’s crime scene notes.

**1.5.8.4** When the vehicle is unattended it shall be properly parked and secured.

**1.5.8.5** When a VCRT vehicle needs repairs, the Crime Laboratory Regional Supervisor (or designee) will be notified. It is the responsibility of the VCRT Leader discovering the problem to report the services needed.

**1.5.8.6** The inspection and maintenance of the vehicle will be the responsibility of the Crime Laboratory Regional Supervisor or their designee.

**1.5.8.7** The vehicle will be inspected and washed on a regular basis, as weather conditions permit. Additionally, the vehicle fluid levels (oil, coolant, etc.) will be inspected and, if necessary, adjusted to the proper levels. These should be documented in the Vehicle Inspection Report (Appendix section).



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---

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---

**1.5.8.8** The on-call VCRT Leader should be given notice, by the Crime Laboratory Regional Supervisor (or designee), of any scheduled maintenance that will make a vehicle unavailable.

**1.5.8.9** When repairs are being made, Crime Laboratory Regional Supervisor and Assistant Director of Forensic Services must be informed of the unavailability of the vehicle so that alternate coverage can be arranged.